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C O N F I D E N T I A L GABORONE 000346

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: TERRORISM FINANCE 2005 UPDATE NO. 2 - BOTSWANA

REF: STATE 32688

Classified By: AMBASSADOR JOSEPH HUGGINS FOR REASONS 1.4 B & D

1. (U) The following is post's response to reftel request for an evaluation of the host government's ability to cooperate in the disruption of terrorist financing. Answers below are keyed to questions in reftel.

2. (U) A. As yet, the GOB has not identified any assets within Botswana subject to freezing, forfeiture or seizure pursuant to UNSC Resolutions 1267 and 1373.

3. (C) B. The GOB lacks coherent and comprehensive AML-CTF legislation, a fully fledged financial intelligence unit, and personnel sufficiently trained in investigating international transactions. Until recently, the GOB lacked a single body to coordinate counter-terrorism issues among all agencies. In late 2004, the GOB began the process of establishing such an overarching committee. This committee, chaired by the Permanent Secretary to the President, will include sub-committees on topics such as money laundering. Once fully functional, this committee should help focus attention on counter-terrorism and facilitate enhanced interaction with the GOB on this subject.

4. (U) C. The GOB has requested technical assistance from Treasury's Office of Technical Assistance (OTA) to combat money laundering and the financing of terrorism. It specifically asked for help in assessing the possibilities for consolidating the existing legislation relevant to AML-CTF into one comprehensive bill, conducting a feasibility study for establishing a fully fledged financial intelligence unit, and providing capacity building, such as training in the investigation of international financial transactions. A team from OTA (Enforcement) plans to visit Botswana March 20-25 to consult with stakeholders on possibilities for initiating such assistance.

5. (U) D. Currently, Botswana is at low risk for use as a site for significant fund raising or banking services. The population sympathetic to Al Qa'ida/Usama bin Laden/Taliban is negligible. The international financial services sector in Botswana is only beginning to emerge. Given Botswana's slim population and small economy, raising or moving significant amounts of money without attracting attention would be difficult.

HUGGINS